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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy — Conference of European Statisticians

Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators

Eighth session
Geneva, 14 and 15 May 2014
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the eighth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, 14 May 2014*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the seventh session.
3. Review of the production of eight indicators from the revised Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia:[1]
   (a) Emission of pollutants into the atmospheric air;
   (b) Ambient air quality in urban areas;

* According to the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to complete the registration form available from the website of the Joint Task Force (http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.05.environ.html) and to transmit it to the secretariat as soon as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to the meeting, by email (ludmila.boichuk@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website http://www.unece.org/meetings/UN_Map.pdf). In case of difficulty, please telephone the secretariat at +41 22 917 2364.

[1] The revised Guidelines, which also include countries in South-Eastern Europe, are available in the form of an online database from http://www.unece.org/env/indicators.html.

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(c) Consumption of ozone-depleting substances;

(d) Greenhouse gas emissions;

(e) Biochemical oxygen demand and concentration of ammonium in rivers;

(f) Nutrients in freshwater;

(g) Protected areas;

(h) Waste generation.

4. Way forward for the production and sharing of the indicators.

5. Further revision of the Indicator Guidelines.

6. Other business.

II. Annotations

The Committee on Environmental Policy and the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians approved the extension of the mandate of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators for the period 2013–2014 (ECE/CEP/2012/2, annex IV). According to its terms of reference, the Joint Task Force should assist national statistical agencies and institutions responsible for the production of national state-of-the-environment reports in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (target countries). Its objectives are to further improve environmental statistics and produce the agreed indicators, strengthen environmental reporting and promote comparability of environmental statistics and indicators in the pan-European region.

The Joint Task Force is open to environmental experts and statisticians from all United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) countries. The European Environment Agency (EEA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Statistics Division, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Energy Agency, the World Health Organization European Centre for Environment and Health, the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other institutions are also invited to designate representatives to the Joint Task Force.

In addition to circulation through the regular channels, meeting documentation, including country contributions, will be posted online on a web page dedicated to the meeting.[2]

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Joint Task Force will be invited to adopt the agenda for its eighth session as contained in the present document.

2. Adoption of the report of the seventh session

The Joint Task Force will be invited to adopt the report of its seventh session, contained in document ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2013/2.

[2] See http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.05.environ.html.

3. Review of the production of eight indicators from the revised Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

(a) Emission of pollutants into the atmospheric air

(b) Ambient air quality in urban areas

(c) Consumption of ozone-depleting substances

(d) Greenhouse gas emissions

(e) Biochemical oxygen demand and concentration of ammonium in rivers

(f) Nutrients in freshwater

(g) Protected areas

(h) Waste generation

The Joint Task Force agreed at its seventh session (Geneva, 5–7 November 2013) that the production and sharing of eight indicators from the revised Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Indicator Guidelines), considered by the Group as core indicators (sub-items (a)-(h) above), should be reviewed in detail. The review should focus for each indicator on the following aspects:

(a) For countries producing and publishing the indicators on the web:

(i) Time series, format and data structure of the published indicator;

(ii) The validation procedure used and published;

(iii) An explanation of the indicator for the general public on the website, including information on the use of the indicator in policymaking or for fulfilling international reporting obligations;

(iv) Shortcomings identified in the process of the production and sharing of the indicator.

(b) For countries not publishing or not producing the indicators: obstacles hindering the publishing or production of the indicator.

The review of the indicators' production and sharing will be supported by an analytical paper to be prepared by the secretariat describing the status of production and sharing of each of the core indicators in each of the target countries. The paper will be based on the information available on the national websites and the additional information or explanations sent by the target countries. Country submissions (in English and/or Russian) with link(s) to the national websites containing the published indicators and with additional information or explanations should be provided to the secretariat **before 28 February 2014** so as to ensure their dissemination to all registered participants and the preparation of the analytical paper before the meeting.

4. Way forward for the production and sharing of the indicators

Based on the findings from the review, the Joint Task Force will be invited to make tailor-made recommendations for actions by the target countries within six months following the meeting. Such actions will refer to:

(a) For countries failing to produce and/or share the indicators: practical solutions for addressing obstacles to indicator production and sharing;

(b) For countries producing and sharing the indicators but facing challenges in this process: practical solutions to improve the process;

(c) For other countries: recommendations for production and sharing of other indicators from the revised Indicator Guidelines.

The recommendations should help the countries to gradually develop and extend their national environmental information system in line with the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles in terms of institutional cooperation, content and infrastructure.

The European Environmental Agency and the European Commission, building on past and ongoing efforts to support the target countries in the gradual implementation of SEIS — e.g., through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument-SEIS 2010–2014 project for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine or the Forest and Biodiversity Governance Including Environmental Monitoring (FLERMONECA) project for Central Asian countries — will take stock of the projects supported by the European Union and inform the Task Force about possible cooperation opportunities, among others, aimed at implementing the recommended actions.

5. Further revision of the Indicator Guidelines

At its seventh session the Joint Task Force requested the secretariat to incorporate additional changes agreed to the Indicator Guidelines and, where necessary, to verify the consistency of the terms and definitions used so as to ensure that the terms were unified with those used by the United Nations Statistics Division and Eurostat.

The secretariat will inform the Joint Task Force on the status of the revision.

6. Other business

The secretariat will inform the Joint Task Force on the progress made by the ECE Transport Statistics Programme in the elaboration of the definitions of energy types for road motor vehicles.

III. Organization of work

Date	*Item(s) of the agenda*
Wednesday, 14 May 2014	
9:30–9:40 a.m.	1 and 2
9:40–11 a.m.	3 (a)
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	3 (b)
2:30–3:30 p.m.	3 (c)
3:30–4:30 p.m.	3 (d)
4:30–5:30 p.m.	3 (e)

Date	*Item(s) of the agenda*
Thursday, 15 May 2014	
9:30–10:30 a.m.	3 (f)
10:30–11:30 a.m.	3 (g)
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	3 (h)
2:30–4:50 p.m.	4
4:50–5:20 p.m.	5
5:20–5:30 p.m.	6